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# Description of a new species of *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947 from Republic of Benin with a key to the known African species (Coleoptera, Elateridae, Agrypnini)

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Coleoptera;
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description;
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West Africa.

**Abstract**. – A new species of *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947 from West Africa (Republic of Benin) is described. It is allied to *R. riesei* Platia, Biondi & Sechi, 2020 known from Gabon for the third antennal article only a little shorter than the second but can be separated for the smaller and stouter body because of elytra shorter compared to pronotum and differences in the male genitalia.

Platia G. & Coache A., 2023. – Description of a new species of *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947 from Republic of Benin with a key to the known African species (Coleoptera, Elateridae, Agrypnini). *Faunitaxys*, 11(27): 1 – 4.

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## Introduction

During our research on the entomological fauna undertaken for more than 15 years now, carried out by our association CEREB (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Entomologiques Béninois), we are led to tour the country in order to have a good sampling of the all the biotopes found on the territory. This time we were on the edge of the Mono River which borders Togo. During this nocturnal survey which was exceptional in terms of the density of insects attracted that night where many new species arrived on the hunting sheet (to be published) which was literally black with beetles including many aquatic species as well as many Elateridae, including this new species of *Rismethus* **n. sp**.

The genus *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947 (type -species *Meristhus scobinula* Candèze, 1857), easily distinguished by the members of the tribe Agrypnini Candèze, 1857 for the constriction of the pronotum immediately behind the anterior angles, includes little more of twenty species widespread particularly in the indo-malayan region. According to the recent catalogue of the click-beetles of the sub- saharan african fauna (Girard, 2017) only one *Rismethus* species was known and described from Somaly Republic (Chassain 2001). Recently (Platia, Biondi & Sechi, 2020 and Platia & Sechi, 2021) have described two species from Gabon and Malawi. The discovery of this further new species from the Republic of Benin show that the genus is widespread in all the sub-saharan Africa and many other species would be probably to describe in the future.

## Material and methods

***Measurements***. – Body length is measured along the midline from the anterior margin of frons to apex of the elytra; width is measured across the broadest part of the body. Pronotal length is measured along the midline; the width is at the broadest part, usually at hind angles.

***Abbreviations***. – The names of institutions, museums and collections providing material for this study are abbreviated as follow:

- **CCEC**: Musée d'Histoire naturelle de Lyon (Musée des Confluences), Lyon, France.
- **CAC**: Collection Alain Coache, France.
- **CBR**: Collection Bernard Rainon, France.
- **CLD**: Collection Lionel Delaunay, France.
- **CPG**: Collection Giuseppe Platia, Gatteo, Italy.

The subfamilial and tribal placement of genera listed below follows Bouchard et al. (2011).

## Results

### Tribe **Agrypnini** Candèze, 1857

### ***Rismethus rainoni* n. sp.**

(Fig. 1-7)

ZooBank: http://zoobank.org/4BB67393-55C9-4DDF-A2EB-11CB4FBD5F27

**Holotype**, ♂, Bénin, Athiémé, rives du Mono, 20.XI.2022, 06°14'20''N - 01°40'00''E - 29 m (Fig. 6 & 7), A. Coache leg. (CCEC).

**Paratypes** (24 ex.)

- **8** ♂ & **9** ♀, same data as holotype (CCEC, CAC, CPG).
- **1** ex., Bénin, Dan, rives du Zou, 17 V 2013, ultra violet, 07°26'32"N - 02°11'57"E, 52 m, A. Coache leg. (CAC).
- **1** ex., Bénin, Pénéssoulou, Gatakpal, 23 II 2020, ultra violet, 09°14'57.00N - 01°35'55.86"E, 374 m, B. Rainon leg. (CBR).
- **1** ex., Bénin, Pénéssoulou, sortie du village, zone humide, ultra violet, 21 II 2020, 09°14'47.29"N - 01°33'00.65"E, 386 m, A. Coache leg. (CAC).
- **1** ex., Bénin, Pénéssoulou, forêt de Pénélan, 06 X 2019, ultra violet, 09°14'58.59''N - 01°31'34.32''E, 401 m, A. Coache leg. (CAC).
- **1** ♂ & **1** ♀, Pénéssoulou, stade, 18 X 2012, ultra violet, 09°14'15''N - 01°33'12''E, 415 m, A. Coache leg. (CLD).

***Reviewer*** :
Josef Mertlik (*République Tchèque*) - http://zoobank.org/A030F7B1-AE16-408D-BAB7-A0A6D7DFAA92

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- **1** ♀, Pénéssoulou, forêt de Pénélan, 11 X 2012, ultra violet, 09°14’50”N - 01°31’45”E, 392 m, A. Coache leg. (CLD).

***Diagnosis***. – A species close to *R. riesei* Platia, Biondi & Sechi, 2020 from Gabon that can be separated for the smaller size and the stouter body because of shorter elytra compared to pronotum and aedeagus with slenderer median lobe and apices of paramera.

### *Description of the holotype*

***Coloration***. – Not or moderately shiny; entirely dark-brown generally with reddish shadings on the basal slope, after the middle and at apex of elytra, in some specimens simulating two symmetrical, sub-rounded spots after the middle near the suture; antennae and legs lighter, ferruginous; all the body is clothed with regular, short, thickened and dark- yellowish scales, partially hiding the integuments.

***Head***. – Narrower than the anterior margin of pronotum, frons slightly convex, densely punctured, with a rough surface, anterior margin straight, prolonged and merged with the clypeus. – *Antennae* ( Fig. 2) very short, strongly serrated from the fourth article on; second and third articles sub-cylindrical, with the second of a larger diameter and slightly longer than the third, taken together twice longer than the fourth; fourth-tenth dilated and wider than long, the last longer and after the middle asymmetrically constricted to the apex.

***Thorax***. – *Pronotum* 1.09-1.12x wider than long, widest in the anterior third, convex, gradually sloping at the sides, more abruptly at base, with a short and shallow mid-longitudinal depression on the basal slope; sides moderately dilated in the anterior third, suddenly constricted before the apex and prolonged to include the eyes; backwards gradually tapering and very slightly sinuate before the posterior angles, the latter short, scarcely divergent, widely truncate and with a very light carina difficult to see; lateral margins crenulate, visible in a dorsal view and interrupted just before the anterior constriction; punctuation dense, uniformly distributed; punctures deep, simple, with shortest and shiny interstices difficult to see because hidden by the scales. – *Pronoto-sternal sutures* deeply grooved in the first half to receive the antennae. Deep grooves subparallel to the pronoto-sternal sutures are present for the accomodation of the anterior tarsi.

***Scutellum***. – Longer than wide, convex, longitudinally carinate, uniformly, finely and densely punctured.

***Elytra***. – 1.9x longer than pronotum and as wide as it, 1.66x longer than wide, convex; sides clearly arcuate, widest just before at the middle then regularly tapering to the apices, these rounded; surface hidden by the scales but shiny, strongly punctured with not well defined striae and interstriae. – *Wings* well developed and able to the fly.

***Legs***. – Tarsal articles simple and decreasing regularly in length; claws simple.

***Aedeagus*** (Fig. 1). – With median lobe just a little longer than the paramera (length 0.37 mm).

***Female***. – Extremely similar to the male only with a little large body and impossible to separate without examination of the genitalia.

***Size***. – length 2.3-2.9 mm; width 0.85-1.0 mm.

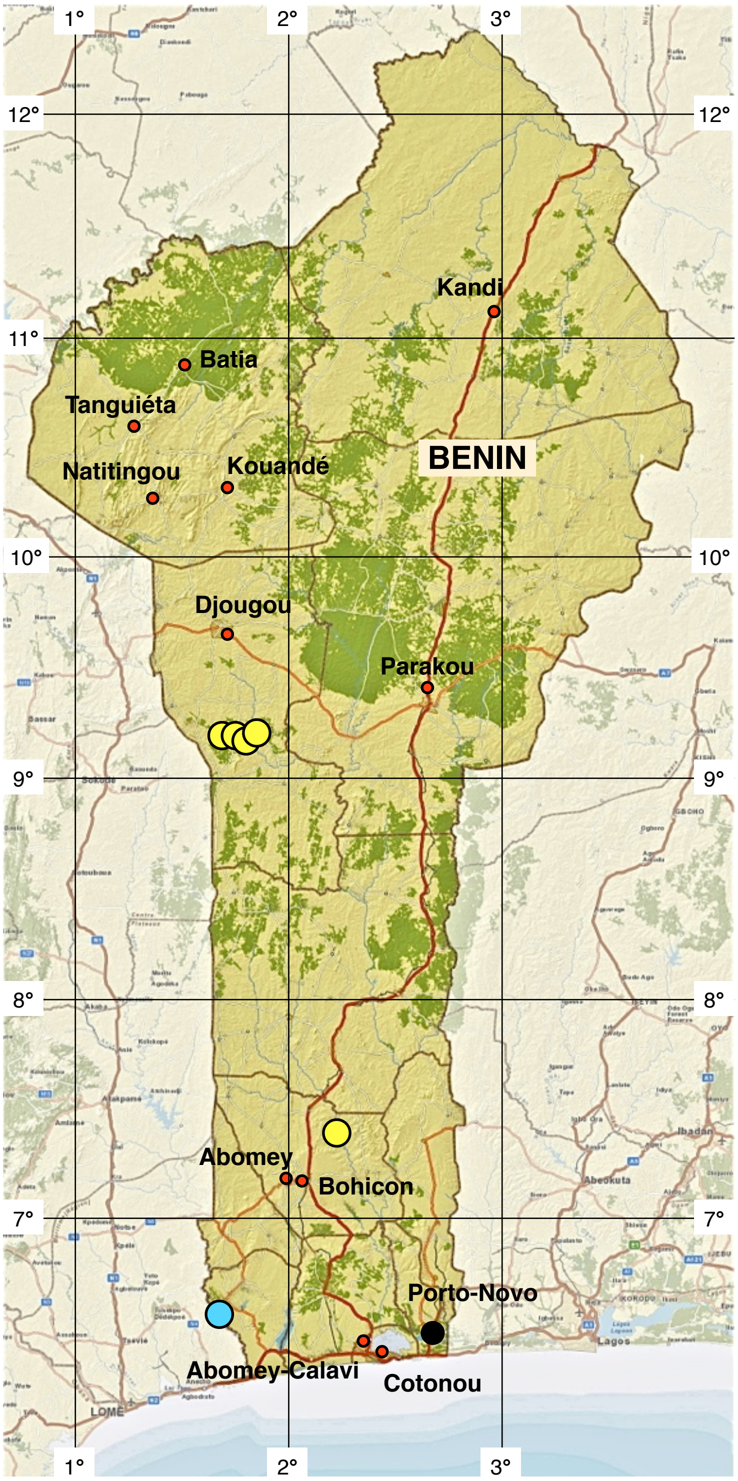
***Etymology***. – The species is dedicated to our friend and traveling companion, Mr. Bernard Rainon with whom we have been inventorying the entomological fauna of Benin for more than 15 years now.

***Ecological notes***. – We cannot specify the ecology of this new species because all the specimens were captured during night hunting with ultraviolet light along the Mono River which borders Benin and Togo, in the municipality of Athiémé.

## Acknowledgements

Our thanks go to the Faculty of Agronomic Sciences of the University of Abomey-Calavi with which we have signed a memorandum of understanding on entomological research in Benin, in collaboration with the Ministry of the environment and the protection of Nature, the General Directorate of Forests and Natural Resources (DGFRN) and the National Center for the Management of Wildlife Reserves (CENAGREF). We thank the Dean of the University of Abomey Calavi, Mr. Brice Sinsin for his unconditional support for our research.

We also thank the managers of the National Parks, for obtaining the necessary authorizations and the managers of the classified forests who facilitated our access to the various sites; the Plant Protection Department, Plant Protection and Phytosanitary Control Department, to obtain phytosanitary certificates; customary chiefs, village leaders and rural community leaders for facilitating our access to the various surveyed sites.



**Map of the Benin**. Distribution of *Rismethus rainoni* **n. sp.**

🔵 Holotype 🟡 Paratypes

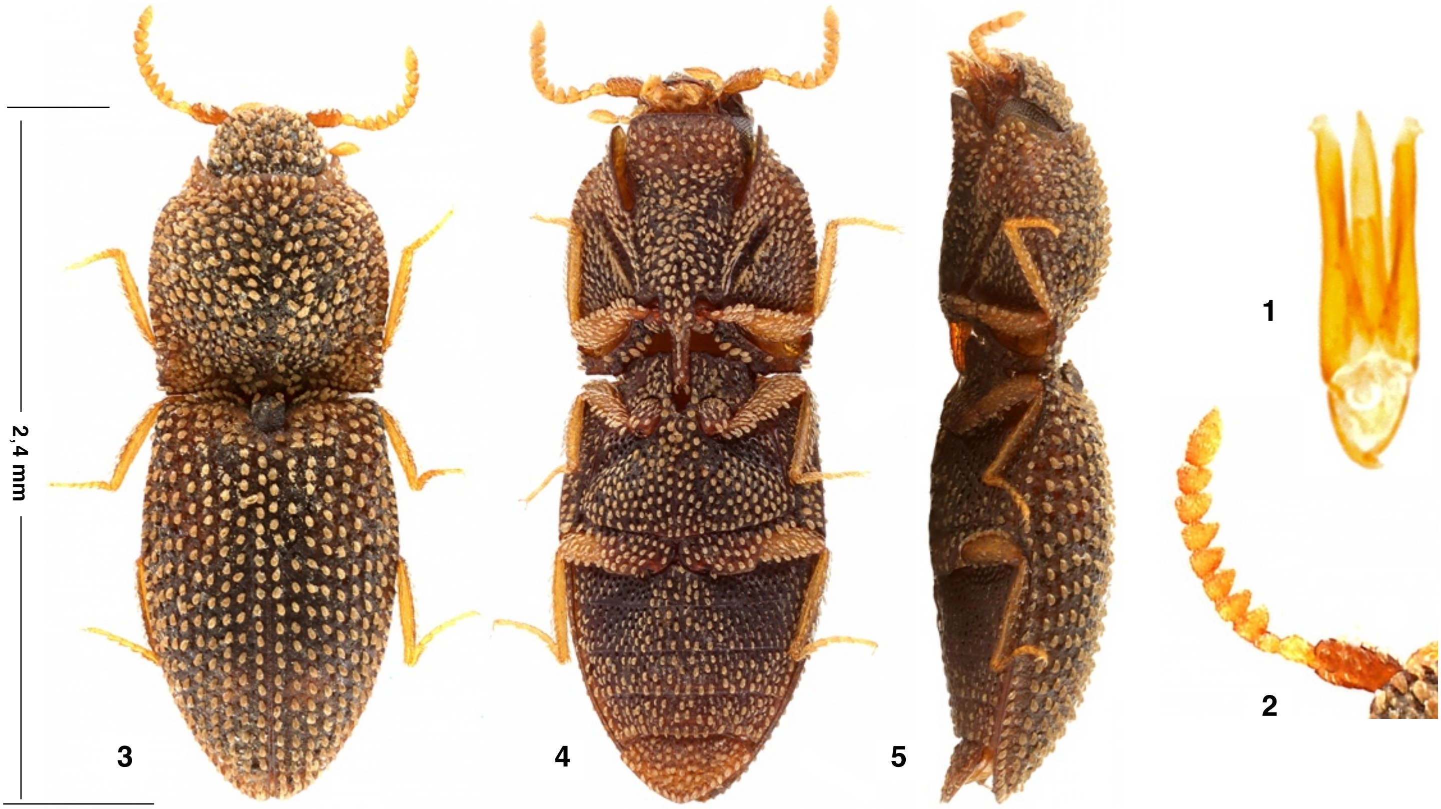


**Fig. 1 - 5**. *Rismethus rainoni* **n. sp.**

**1**. Aedeagus, dorsal view. **2**. Antenna. **3-5**. Habitus. **3**. Dorsal. **4**. Ventral. **5**. Lateral.

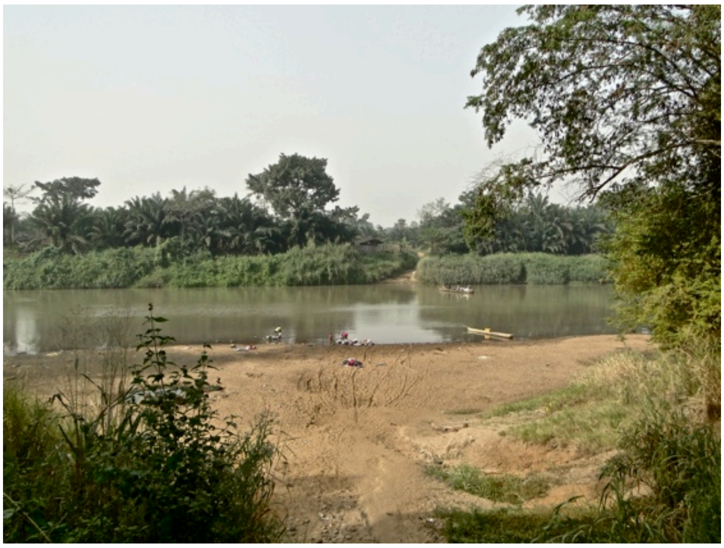


**Fig. 6**. Biotop of the holotype of *Rismethus rainoni* **n. sp.**

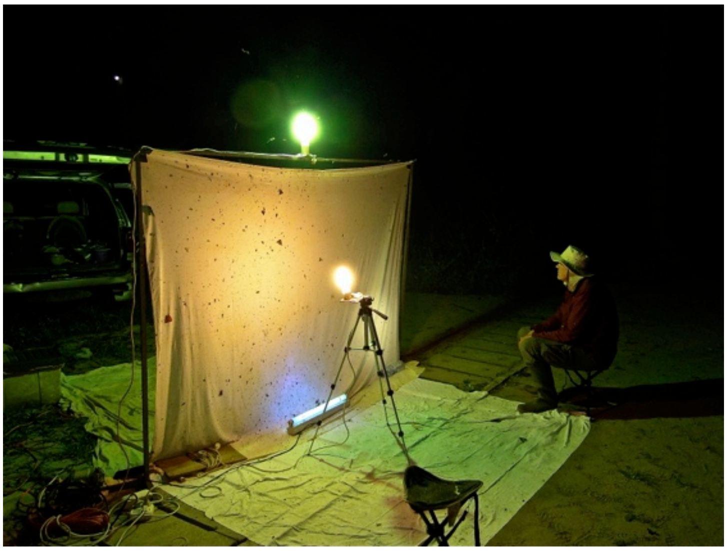


**Fig. 7**. Method of collecting the holotype of *Rismethus rainoni* **n. sp.**

And finally, we would also like to thank the people who contributed to the realization of the expeditions: Lionel Delaunay and Pascal Deschamps.

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### Key to the four African known species of *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947

**1.** Third antennal article just shorter than the previous .......... **2**

— Third antennal article notably shorter than the previous .......... **3**

**2.** Size larger (length 3.3-3.6 mm), pronotum long as wide, elytra longer (2.05x) compared to pronotum. Median lobe of aedeagus long as the paramera .......... ***riesei*** Platia, Biondi & Sechi, 2020 (Gabon).

— Size smaller (length 2.3-2.9 mm), pronotum wider than long, elytra shorter (1.9x) compared to pronotum. Median lobe of aedeagus slightly longer than paramera .......... ***rainoni*** **n. sp.** (Benin Republic).

**3.** Slenderer body; elytra with more or less distinct and expanded reddish maculae; median lobe of aedeagus long as the paramera .......... ***chassaini*** Platia & Sechi, 2021 (Malawi).

— Stouter body; elytra without reddish maculae; median lobe of aedeagus shorter than the paramera .......... ***somalicus*** Chassain, 2001 (Somaly Republic).

## Résumé

Platia G. & Coache A., 2023. – Description d'une nouvelle espèce du genre *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947 de la République du Bénin avec la clé des *Rismethus* africains (Coleoptera, Elateridae, Agrypnini). *Faunitaxys*, 11(27): 1 – 4.

Une nouvelle espèce du genre *Rismethus* Fleutiaux, 1947 est décrite de la République du Bénin. Elle est apparentée à *R. riesei* Platia, Biondi & Sechi, 2020 connue du Gabon avec le troisième article antennaire seulement un petit peu plus court que le second mais peut être séparée par le corps plus petit et plus robuste en raison des élytres plus courts que le pronotum et des différences dans les genitalia mâle.

Mots-clés. – Coleoptera, Elateridae, Agrypnini, *Rismethus*, taxonomie, nouvelle espèce, clé, description, Bénin, Afrique de l'Ouest.

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# Faunitaxys

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***Illustration de la couverture*** :

La **Porte du non-retour** est un arc mémorial en béton et bronze dans la ville de Ouidah, au Bénin. Elle a été érigée en 1995 à l'initiative de l'UNESCO. Elle commémore la déportation des millions de captifs mis en esclavage en direction des colonies d'outre-Atlantique dans la traite négrière.

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